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ABSTRACT

Playing an important role in developing new social policies and introducing new methods, the Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare (NIZW) is an independent foundation funded by a combination of private and public monies to conduct research and to develop and implement programs in five areas: (1) care and nursing; (2) organization of care; (3) youth care and welfare; (4) social policy; and (5) information and infrastructure. The NIZW care and nursing programs focus on: (1) home care, especially developing models for perception-oriented care, psychosocial problems of the chronically ill, and transfer of nursing home care; (2) family care, especially for families of chronically ill children; and (3) the use of volunteers, specifically developing a balanced volunteer policy and training programs. Organization of care efforts include experiments in community care, employment for individuals with disabilities, and policy development. Youth care and welfare programs include innovations in child day care and out-of-school care, prevention and early intervention programs, and curative youth care. Social policy efforts focus on developing tools with which municipalities and institutions can map the broad outlines of district and neighborhood social structures and for use in evaluation and as a basis for decision making as well as the implementation of pilot projects to improve the quality of life in local neighborhoods. The NIZW also houses four centers providing information and organization services in the care and welfare sectors. (KB)

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Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare / NIZW

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Source of knowledge and inspiration

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Anyone in the Netherlands looking for expertise in the fields of care, welfare and health care has come to the right place at the Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare (NIZW). The NIZW is not in the Hague, where the government and the ministries are located, nor in Amsterdam or Rotterdam, where social change usually first becomes visible, but in Utrecht, the centrally located fourth city of the Netherlands.

Utrecht has the problems of any other large city. Even during the five-minute walk from the train to the NIZW offices, it can be seen that not everyone is enjoying the benefits of the economic growth of the nineties. Between the shoppers and the stream of commuters, the homeless try to earn their keep by selling street papers or making music. Others rummage through the refuse containers of the shops at night, hoping to find something to their liking. It is not for nothing that the care for vagrants and the homeless has become one of NIZW's activities in addition to a variety of other initiatives that promote the social integration of groups who, for various reasons, have missed or are in danger of missing the connection with mainstream society.

Social developments in the Netherlands

Participation and social cohesion

Under the influence of the decentralization of government policy, many local institutions in the fields of care and welfare have over recent years developed plans and formulated policies, in consultation with municipal authorities, in order to help integrate into society those groups that wish to do so. In close collaboration with the professionals on the job, the NIZW plays an important role in developing new policies and introducing new methods.

By means of regulations and projects, the social services of local municipalities are trying to activate the long-term unemployed and, if possible,re-establish them on the

labour market. Drawing on the long history of welfare work, the NIZW puts forward ideas, and researches and describes what is being experienced in various places in the country.

In order to prevent people from becoming marginalized, the social participation of the elderly and of black and minority ethnic groups in the Netherlands is also receiving increasing attention. People with a handicap or a chronic disorder should become less dependent on how services are organized for them and have more opportunities for determining their own lives. This striving for the 'socialization of care' implies that institutions involved in care, housing, education, employment and leisure activities should work more flexibly. In the future, the professionals will offer their services as much as possible in those places where people with impairments want them, without detracting from the expertise that has been built up over the years. The NIZW supports professional care providers, volunteers and family caregivers in realizing this ideal.

'Working integrally' is the creed of the nineties in the Netherlands. Institutions that set out the policy for a specific target group or a defined working area now have to work more closely together and gear their activities more to the needs of clients. From 'supply-orientated to demand-dictated' is an important policy goal that has turned everything upside down for many institutions in recent years. The NIZW is trying to guide this change in the right direction.

The client should always come first, also in the care and welfare sector. A multicultural approach must become a matter of course in the work of all institutions. By means of experiments the NIZW is stimulating paid staff and volunteers to implement these concepts in their daily practice.

The Netherlands in figures

***Size of population*: 15.75 million**

***Life expectancy*: 77.5; men 74.7, women 80.4**

***Ethnic division:* 91% born in the Netherlands, 1.9% in other EU countries, 1.2% in the former Dutch East Indies/Indonesia, 1.1% in Surinam, 0.5% in Turkey, 0.6% in Morocco, 0.5% in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, 3.2% in other countries.**

***Gross national product*: 302.9 billion Euro**

***Unemployment percentage*: 5.2% (1997)**

***Economic characteristics*: highly developed and prosperous, based on private enterprise with a regulatory government**

Youth care

As a result of the increased job market participation of women, the need for day care for children and young people outside the home has increased as well. As in other countries, many people find the quality of upbringing, education and childcare important. Early detection of developmental and behavioural problems is becoming increasingly important. The NIZW supports a wide range of services in the development of new forms of after-school day care and parenting support for a broad target group. Moreover, it also introduces specific methods for intervening in crisis situations and avoiding the need to place children outside the home as far as possible.

Children and young people in the densely populated Netherlands are increasingly demanding their own place in the public domain. The focus on youth participation has received a new impulse, because involving children and young people can contribute to their social competence and the social cohesion in districts and neighbourhoods. At the same time there is heated public debate on the sense of values and the feeling of responsibility among young people. This is due to the increase in violent incidents at schools, in night life, and in the streets. Influenced by this, the call for more severe punishment for minors has increased in recent years. The NIZW is looking for constructive solutions in this area of tension.

The role of the NIZW

Institutions in the fields of care and welfare face the complicated task of responding appropriately to the social developments outlined above. The Netherlands has a long tradition of care and welfare facilities that have their origins in private initiative, but are largely financed by government subsidies. The conditions set by the government for these subsidies have changed significantly over the past decades. The budgets have been limited, the subsidy conditions have become more business-oriented and the actual results weigh more heavily than before. For reasons of efficiency, many institutions have meanwhile merged. As a result, most of the 400,000 professionals in this sector have been through a number of disrupted and uncertain years. And, of course, the volunteers and family carers have alsc felt the impact of all the reorganizations in this sector. The NIZW tries to be a source of information, innovation and support for all these parties.

In the Netherlands, there was a need for a strong combination of research, method development and implementation. Therefore the government decided towards the end of the eighties that an independent national body was necessary, to work towards quality improvement in the care and welfare sector. That body was the Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare (NIZW), which has meanwhile developed into an organization with over three hundred employees and an annual turnover of about 20.4 million Euro. 'The care and welfare sector certainly has no reason to complain about a lack of interest' confirms NIZW Director Peter van Lieshout.

Independent institute

From an international viewpoint, the NIZW is fairly unique. It is not a government body but receives a subsidy from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. Furthermore, the institute carries out assignments for other ministries and organizations in the non-profit sector. The NIZW is an independent institute and does not act as an interest group on the national level. Paid staff, patients and client organizations, and employers in the Netherlands all have their own interest groups for this purpose.
The work of the NIZW is carried out in close consultation and intensive cooperation with the government on the one hand and with interest groups, research institutions and universities and organizations carrying out the work on the other. This is a typical example of the Dutch consensus culture: only after everyone has consulted with everyone else do new initiatives get the green light, as well as money and the policy freedom to prove their worth.
NIZW staff are actively involved in international discussions on various topics.

The NIZW in figures

Size of staff: approximately 350 employees, of whom about 250 in permanent employment and about 100 on a project basis

***Budget*: 20.4 million Euro, of which about 50% is structural and about 50% is from project subsidies and own income**

***Main financing sources*: Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of the Interior; private funds in the field of care and welfare**

***Legal form*: independent foundation**

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Programmes

The work of the NIZW is a combination of research, development and implementation that makes it possible to support innovations and improvements in the field of work, from start to finish. NIZW's expertise is expressed primarily in programmes of a temporary nature, which last an average of five years. With regard to the direct transfer of knowledge on specific topics, the NIZW has a number of *information and expertise centres* that professionals and volunteers can address with practical questions. Moreover, the NIZW ensures the broader dissemination of knowledge and experience in the form of *practical products* such as workbooks, manuals, congresses, training, videos and CD-ROMS. With a view to cohesive content, the programmes are grouped into five different categories, or *clusters*:

- Care and nursing
- Organization of care
- Youth care and welfare
- Social policy
- Information and infrastructure

Care and nursing

How are the activities of professional nurses and carers related to each other and to the work of volunteers and family carers? This is the major question in the Dutch care sector at the moment. The *Care and nursing* cluster is involved intensively with this question and is developing innovative answers, together with the professionals.

Home care

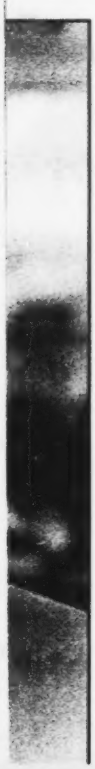
Thanks to prosperity and progress in the medical sector, people live longer than ever before, even when they have chronic diseases. This creates a greater demand for nursing and care, but also for a targeted and cost-effective approach. Professional nursing has shifted almost entirely to the hospitals and nursing homes in recent years, while the care sector has had to cover the entire remaining area. Combined with the fact that more and more ill people are living at home

and are setting higher requirements to the provision of external help, this places tremendous pressure on the Dutch care sector. Moreover, many home care institutions have to work with very tight budgets.

NIZW staff are closely involved in discussions on the future of the nursing and care professions. Their contribution is based on their own practical experience. This has resulted recently in the development of new work models for *perception-oriented* care in one of the Dutch home care regions. These are methods of working in the home care sector that do justice both to the needs of the patient and the possibilities of the professional caregiver. From these models, the essential organizational conditions for home care can be derived, and then presented to the management of the institution concerned.

An important element in the work of nursing and care staff on which the NIZW is focusing attention is that of the *psychosocial problems* experienced mainly by the chronically ill, and by parents of chronically ill children. These problems are often underestimated in the Netherlands. A number of hospitals and home care organizations are taking part in testing a multi-stage plan that professionals can use to determine whether, and when, they need to take action with regard to psychosocial problems of their clients.

A third innovatory initiative in the area of nursing and care is the experiment concerning *the transfer of nursing home care*. This means that district nurses ensure that nursing home doctors, occupational therapists and other nursing home staff visit people in their homes, so that admission can be postponed.



Family care

Within the field of nursing and care, the NIZW also focuses on partners, friends, parents, brothers, sisters and children who take on the greater proportion of the task of caring for the long-term or severely ill. In the Netherlands these total about a million people. At the policy level, the NIZW is working on strengthening the position of family carers by drawing attention to the role they play in the care process and to their need for more of a say, for recognition and support, not only by other family members, paid staff and patient organizations, but also by government bodies and welfare organizations. For this reason political discussions, for example about the introduction of respite care-leave, are being closely followed, and fuelled. In this context, the NIZW has carried out an international study on the ways in which family carers in various European countries are supported. This study has been adapted for home care organizations into a broadly based vision on the support of family carers.

The *Family care* programme has an innovative function for various target groups. After various projects concerned with older family carers, the project that was specifically aimed at better support for *parents of chronically ill children* is now also beginning to bear fruit. This places the focus, among other things, on enhancing the skills of paediatricians, family doctors and nurses. A new target group that will receive attention consists of *children and young people who are growing up in a family with a parent, brother or sister who has a long-term illness*.

Volunteers

The Netherlands has always had a large number of people who volunteer their services in the field of care and welfare. There are 690,000 volunteers working in the health care sector, 805,000 in the social care services, and 78,000 in sociocultural work. In recent years, the NIZW has witnessed a distinct change in the way volunteers want to be involved in this unpaid work. They work less often for charitable motives, are no longer so quick to form long-term ties with one organization, and choose more deliberately for activities that also give them some form of satisfaction. The NIZW considers it its task to give volunteers a clear position in the sector to make institutions that are dependent on volunteers more aware of the need to maintain a good volunteer policy.

One development requiring considerable attention is that organizations are constantly setting higher requirements to professionalism of volunteers. This phenomenon is found mainly in terminal care, in support for ex-psychiatric patients, in bereavement counselling and in victim support. This may result in tension between supply and demand and in confrontations between volunteers and professionals. Furthermore, the increasing obligations are often directly opposed to the need of volunteers to retain a certain degree of freedom.

Based on research, the NIZW is helping institutions with the *formulation of a balanced volunteer policy*. Not only in welfare work, but also in nursing and residential homes where there are increasing numbers of volunteers. The NIZW offers institutions and volunteers concrete aids such as *checklists for recruitment and selection*, which allow both parties to clearly state their expectations and conditions.

In order to enhance the expertise of volunteers in specific sectors, *various training programmes* have been developed, among others in the field of bereavement counselling and of home visits aimed at stimulating interest in participation.

Especially for volunteers who work with older people and who are involved in *matters concerned with giving meaning to life*, the NIZW is working on material for detecting any underlying mental problems of the elderly.

Organization of care

The care of the disabled, the chronically ill and the elderly in the Netherlands is slowly but surely undergoing an enormous change. The government's aim is no longer to remove people who are dependent on care from their own environment, but to promote integration in their own environment and to bring the care to them as much as possible. The goal is for people to live as independently as possible and to participate as much as possible in local activities: in ordinary schools, in regular jobs, while retaining their own sense of empowerment. In other words, the emphasis is shifting from people's limitations to their abilities. It goes without saying that patient and client organizations fully support these developments towards greater autonomy, although they are still on their guard for cutbacks in disguise.

Experiments

The NIZW staff support the large-scale operation that is necessary to realize these ideals. Forty residential institutions are on the verge of starting experimental forms of *community care*, where their clients will be able to live as much as possible in ordinary neighbourhoods. In order to provide support at home for families with a disabled child, professionals are working together with the parents towards customized services in the care sector. Under the new conditions, nurses have an important role in supporting parents by giving timely warning of somatic and psychosocial problems and by providing assistance.

For people with a disability or chronic illness who want to return to the labour market, the NIZW is working on setting up *social companies* that can offer regular work but also pay more attention to the employee's abilities and needs. In four regions, experiments are being set up - specifically for young people with a disability - in which the transition from school to work plays a key role, but which also search for other forms of meaningful daytime occupation when a regular job is not an option.

Home care

Also for those people who start to experience physical difficulties at a later age, care will be organized as much as possible around their own home in the future. Where, earlier, people sought out the care, the care now seeks out the people. This, however, requires a number of affordable *adaptations in the home* such as alarm systems and the extension of services such as meals on wheels and help with odd jobs around the house. Moreover, it also requires a *social infrastructure* so that people can keep up contacts and spend their time satisfactorily. The NIZW provides stimulation in the form of experiments in which older people in the neighbourhood are actively involved, for example as a 'reading-helper' in schools.

By actively encouraging a local care policy, local municipalities play an important role in building up *care networks* around the ill, the old and the disabled. The NIZW works together with local municipalities on ways of setting up such networks, for example where large, new housing developments are being located near Utrecht and Amsterdam.

Youth care and welfare

The NIZW also initiates innovations in the sectors of care and welfare for children and young people. In this area, the role of parents, other family members, neighbours, teachers, community workers and associations is slowly but surely changing. The need for child day care and out-of-school care has increased considerably. In order to meet this need, institutions are developing new forms of pre-school and out-of-school care.
There is a greatly increased focus on preventing behavioural and developmental problems among children and young people, and this has led to new initiatives in the field of parenting support and developmental stimulation, prevention of juvenile crime and child abuse.
With a view to preventing drop-out among children and young people, the policy is aimed at providing help as quickly, as unintrusively, as briefly and as close to home as possible. This includes, among other things, new ways of intervening quickly and effectively in upbringing situations and so avoiding, as far as possible, the need to remove the child from its home.
Where it is necessary, however, to place children and young people in foster homes and residential facilities, plans are under way for a more flexible and cohesive system of ambulant and residential facilities.

Basic provision

As in other European countries, the Netherlands pays considerable attention to extending innovative child day care and out-of-school care. Staff at the NIZW are, for instance, supervising sixteen pilot projects of the so-called *SPEELproject (play project)* that is aimed at improving the quality of day nurseries.
Under the title of the *extended schoolday*, recent experiments have been offering a programme in which children and young people are introduced after school to activities in the fields of sport, technology, art and culture, as a matter of course. The underlying aim is to eliminate any disadvantages that children may have where the home environment does not provide these activities.
The NIZW also supports collaboration between institutions in the fields of care, welfare and education within the framework of the *extended school*, a multifunctional facility in the neighbourhood. In order to give new impetus to the care of young people, the NIZW supervises experimental *out-of-school day care* and *teenager programmes* in a number of municipalities.

Prevention and early intervention

The NIZW has an extensive programme aimed at supporting families with children

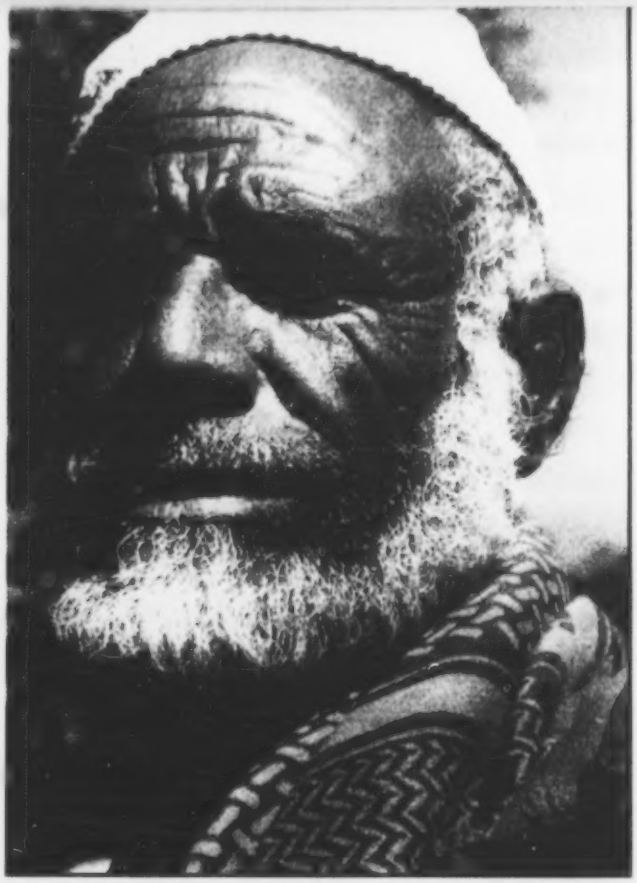
who run an increased risk of developmental problems. By developing and introducing courses such as *Raising Children* and *Hanen*, that are aimed at improving the communication between parents and young children, the NIZW is trying to contribute towards preventive measures. Other methods for supporting parents are *Home Start*, a form of volunteer home help for families with young children who are in stressful circumstances, and *Mothers Inform Mothers*, where first-time mothers are given the opportunity – besides the existing Parent and Child programme – to learn from experienced mothers. Other projects are specifically aimed at preventing children who are showing signs of difficult behaviour at an early age from, slipping into crime.
As it is impossible to draw a clear-cut line between prevention and curative care, the NIZW is also working on methods that can be applied in both cases. This frequently involves intensive and short-term programmes that are carried out in the families' homes, such as *Families First*, which offers an alternative to placement of a child away from home. The specific knowledge and information in the area of child abuse is concentrated in the Child Abuse Information Centre. This centre also works on prevention by developing training and information materials for schools and childcare facilities. The NIZW also houses the National Child Abuse Reporting Centre, which plays a key role in the network of Child Abuse Advice and Reporting Centres.
In order to bring more cohesion into the various forms of care (support, prevention and treatment), the NIZW develops integrated social and educational approaches at the neighbourhood level, whereby positive, supportive and protective powers are also activated in the immediate environment of children and young people.

Curative youth care

In the curative sector, the NIZW is working mainly on developing an intensive, ambulant approach that prevents placement in a residential institution, or facilitates reintegration into society. A recent example of this is the development of *Departure Training* that prepares young people for an independent life outside residential care. The training aims at developing a personal network and increasing the social competence of the young people concerned.

Directing Youth Care

Staff at the NIZW play an important role in the reorganization the Dutch government has titled *Directing Youth Care*. This operation is necessary in order to create more harmony, order and clarity in the maze of facilities and regulations in the over-organized Dutch system. Until recently, that system consisted of three clearly divided sectors - the legal protection of children, the mental welfare of children and youth, and the child and youth care sector. The absence of mutual cooperation and harmonization between these three sectors is largely due to the fact that they fall under the responsibility of different departments, namely Justice, and Health, Welfare and Sport.
Besides the abolition of this compartalization, the Directing Youth Care programme is also meant to create a strong system of general, preventive and curative



facilities.
In order to promote harmony and cooperation between the various facilities, to make the supply more easily accessible, to streamline the financing, and to attune the aid more closely to the need, regional *Childcare Services* have been set up in recent years. These form a single registration desk, behind which institutions jointly determine the assistance needed and decide on the most appropriate way of providing it.
The NIZW supports the Childcare Services in ascertaining the individual needs of their clients and in setting up the care supply accordingly. Within the framework of this so-called mixed economy of care, experiments are being set up to develop specific programmes for various target groups.

Social policy

Social policy in the Netherlands has received a new impulse in recent years. Because of governmental decentralization, there was a need for local government to work in new ways towards more cohesion between the local residents and the facilities in their immediate environment. Terms such as *social integration* and *social cohesion* reflect the need for new social links and the concern about the lack of contact between local municipalities, facilities and citizens. While at first sight it seems to consist of familiar themes and matters relating to building up the community, the various managerial relationships involved have changed considerably. Whereas before the local residents had to demand the right to express their view with the support of community development workers, today the local authorities themselves take the initiative in involving the community in changes to their environment. Of course, this has to do with the need to create public support for local decision-making and implementation.
An important new fact that local social policy must take into account is the multicultural nature of many districts. The districts that cause the most concern are those where contact between the various social communities is minimal, where the level of facilities is the least satisfactory and unemployment is relatively high. Recent research by the Central Bureau for Statistics has shown that people from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles living in the Netherlands benefit proportionally less from economic growth

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than Dutch people and are barely able to overcome their educational deprivation. Against this background, fear of tensions and conflict, especially among the young, is growing.

Tools and projects

The NIZW is developing social policy tools with which municipalities and institutions can map the broad outlines of district and neighbourhood social structures. Those can then be used for evaluation and as a basis for decisions on the methods and means to be applied.

Furthermore, in a number of pilot projects spread over various cities, the NIZW also works on a new approach to the quality of life in local neighbourhoods. These projects are being carried out under the title *The Whole Neighbourhood* and the objective is to involve the local residents more closely in decisions and plans of local bodies to improve their living environment. The projects are intended to provide usable tools and methods around four themes: the community-friendly neighbourhood, the learning neighbourhood, the healthy neighbourhood and the working neighbourhood.

The *NORMA* project was set up to cope with young people who attract attention in a negative sense, and is specifically for youth workers who want to tackle trouble and violence in the neighbourhood. This project links up with other new methods that are being introduced by the NIZW in the Netherlands.

Participation

In order to encourage the participation of residents who have been unemployed for a longer period, the NIZW is hoping to start experiments with *neighbourhood-targeted social activation*. Moreover, a separate programme will also deal with *participation in the workforce*.

The participation of the *older generation* is high on the agenda. Now that older people live longer and remain independent for as long as possible, institutions in the neighbourhood must involve them when implementing various facilities. This is certainly true for *older black and minority ethnic people* who plan to stay in the Netherlands. The NIZW has started an experiment, commissioned by a private welfare fund, intended to give community centres and neighbourhood facilities for the elderly a more *multicultural character*.

Social policy is not something that applies exclusively to cities. Radical demographic changes are also observed in rural areas. In order to support those local authorities, the NIZW is starting a project for *rural municipalities*.

Information and infrastructure

Besides these four thematic clusters, the NIZW also houses four centres that provide information and organization services in the care and welfare sectors. These centres all function under the name of *information and infrastructure*, and each has its own specific field of interest.

The **Centre for Social Information** focuses primarily on providing information to everyone with questions pertaining to his or her own situation. These could relate to social law and regulations, but also to illness, or disabilities. The centre has a special telephone helpline to answer such questions The centre also has specialized editors who concentrate on recording the information and reproducing it in various publications and CD-ROMS. A further important task of the centre is to provide tailor-made public information to institutions such as hospitals.

The **Sector Information Centre** focuses on providing information about *developments in the care and welfare sector*. That information could vary from statistical data on trends, results and numbers of employees to overviews of new projects in a specific area. The editors at this centre compile and publish information and maintain databases. Part of the centre is involved specifically with the introduction and improvement of *information technology*, which furthers the exchange of information between institutions and organizations.

The **Centre for Professional and Educational Matters** recently has been closely involved in improving the harmonization between education and the employment market in the care and welfare sectors. In consultation with employees' and employers' organizations, a model has been developed in which all jobs have been included and reduced from 600 to a total of 250. Based on the new *job profiles* developed by the centre, professional training programmes can be better tuned to actual practice. Among the things being tackled by the Centre for Professional and Educational Matters is also the development of models for job rotation developing tools to reduce work pressure. In an international context, the centre advises, for example, on job profiles in the social sector in Central and Eastern Europe.

The **International Centre** arranges for the international exchange of information and expertise. The staff of the *International Help Desk* provide both verbal and written or electronic information about the Netherlands - not only in the field of care and welfare, but also in the area of national health - to colleagues abroad and other interested parties. They, in turn, also provide information on developments abroad to Dutch professionals and interested parties. An important task of the International Centre is to look for partners abroad, and to build up international networks. The aim is to create links on themes and problems that are topical in different countries. An essential part of this is the exchange of experience and data. In this way,

international contacts can lead to new initiatives and methods.
The centre is also involved in setting up concrete projects whereby Dutch expertise is applied abroad. Up to now, these projects have been mainly in Central and Eastern Europe.

Publishing department

The NIZW has its own publishing department that publishes the products of the programmes and centres in the form of research reports, workbooks, manuals, almanacs, video tapes and CD-ROMS. All these materials are written in Dutch, with the exception of the work materials for black and minority ethnic target groups. A number of English-language products are also available, especially reports of international research projects. There is a list available of products that have been published in other languages. The NIZW publishing department welcomes foreign publishers who are interested in translating its Dutch-language products.
The NIZW also attempts to ensure the implementation of its body of ideas in other ways. For example, besides having its own Education and Training department, it also has its own Course and Conference Bureau, which organizes, amongst other things, international conferences in the Netherlands.

Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses

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